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Charles Browne
Civ. Pers.

DECISION



**THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20548**

B-187076

FEB 8 1977

FILE: Raymond Eluhow - Travel Expenses in Connection
MATTER OF: Funeral

DIGEST: Employee who returned to duty station to attend funeral of mother alleges that mission was substantially completed before return and second trip was for different purpose. Claim for travel expenses may be paid if agency determines that mission was substantially completed or second trip was for different objective. See B-175511, April 25, 1972, and B-164875, August 21, 1968.

By letter dated July 23, 1976, Mrs. Dolores T. Hodges, an authorized certifying officer of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, requested an advance decision regarding the propriety of certifying for payment the reclaim voucher of Mr. Raymond Eluhow for the cost of air travel from Las Vegas, Nevada, to Washington, D.C., and return. The claim was previously administratively disallowed on the basis of decision 45 Comp. Gen. 299 (1965) which states that travel in connection with the illness or death of a member of the employee's family is personal travel and cannot be reimbursed. The record shows that the employee returned to his duty station to attend the funeral of his mother.

In submitting his reclaim the employee states that his work schedule contains no prescribed period of travel but instead involves continuous travel as is deemed necessary in the conduct of various investigations. He further states that he frequently returns to his duty station for processing the raw material from said investigations. In addition, he alleges that his work was substantially completed at the time of his return to his duty station and that the second trip involved an unrelated matter.

In support of his reclaim the employee cites our decisions B-164875, August 21, 1968, and B-175511, April 25, 1972. Both of these decisions involve exceptions to the general rule stated in 45 Comp. Gen. 299, *supra*, which precludes reimbursement for travel incident to the death or illness of a family member. In B-164875, *supra*, the temporary duty travel was performed for the purpose of accomplishing two separate and distinct objectives.

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In B-175511, supra, the return travel was accomplished after the employee had "substantially completed" his mission. In the first case we held that reimbursement could be made upon a proper administrative determination that the employee would have performed travel to accomplish one of the two separate objectives. In the second case we permitted reimbursement upon an administrative determination that the employee had substantially completed his mission.

In the instant case it appears that the employee may qualify for reimbursement under either the exception stated in B-164875, supra, or the exception stated in B-175511, supra. Accordingly, if it is administratively determined that Mr. Eluhw qualified for either of the exceptions mentioned above, no objection will be raised by this Office to certification for payment of the claim.

Deputy

R. F. KILLICK
Comptroller General
of the United States